Programs Branch

User Report

COMMUNITY WORK SERVICE QUEBEC PILOT PROJECT

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The working paper is available in French.
Ce document de travail est disponible en français.

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INTRODUCTION

Community work service and diversion are two closely related ideas.

In the area of criminal justice, the idea of diversion developed over the last fifteen years and represents a new concept of law enforcement. The development of this concept can be traced from documents, experiments and discussions. It began with the principle of possible alternatives to the judicial process itself and, within that process, of options other than custodial sentences. Over the years community work service became just one of these options.

First, we shall briefly attempt to put the different ideas and their development in perspective since we believe it is important to examine the problems underlying the "community work" concept as such. Next, we shall deal with the legal aspect and, last but not least, we shall describe a pilot project conducted in Quebec for young people in the Community Work Programme (CWP) sponsored by the Montreal Bureau de Consultation Jeunesse (BCJ) [Montreal Youth Consultation Office]. This paper does not lay claim to being the last word on the idea of community work nor on the pilot project (CPW) but it attempts to clarify both in order to enable the reader to understand the value and the significance of community work for the young.

SOME KEYNOTES

To develop alternatives, to assess the real impact of custodial sentences, to establish their true costs are some of the underlying concerns. How to best integrate the offender into the process, how to make him assume responsibility were some of the ideas current in the seventies and still considered relevant today.

In 1976 the Law Reform Commission stated:

> "By requiring the delinquent to perform a socially useful task in the community in order to punish him for the wrong or the harm he has inflicted on said community, it would be possible to combine the aspects of punishment, deterrent and redress with that of restitution." (LRC 1976, p.135)

Punitive value, certainly - but educational value as well, that was the basic idea. The development of educational models for adults and youths was discussed, these models would ultimately become programmes of alternative solutions for traditional interventions. These programmes were based on the idea that"in doing something for others, the offender would compensate the community which, it was hoped, would in turn help him to readjust to society" (LRC 1976, p.147).

There would also be a positive impact on the members of the community involved. The aim was to attempt to reconcile the interests of society and those of the victim with fair and equitable treatment of the delinquent. The latter would repay his debt to society and society in turn would gain in services as well as in social and financial benefits. This was the challenge. Diversion thus was seen as a means of bypassing or attenuating contacts with the criminal justice system. It would involve the community and would rebuild constructive links with the latter postulating

> "that criminality has social roots and sentences should take into account not only the offender but also the community and the victim." (LRC 1974, p. 24 of Working Paper No.7)

FROM WORDS TO ACTION

Against this background there arose a profusion of ideas, of initiatives, of innovative experiments and useful reflections. In several parts of Canada projects sprang up. Reconciliation, compensation of victims, community work projects were some examples.

Without dwelling on each of the many experiments, it should be pointed out that as they developed, the idea of diversion became more prominent and constituted the cornerstone of a new penal philosophy, "a new link between society and the judicial system." (Charbonneau Report, p.5). It was in this context that one of the new schemes such as community work programmes began to develop. A few historical benchmarks should be mentioned before going any further.

IN QUEBEC

In Quebec community service first began for adults in 1976. The idea had been launched in 1970 by a British Advisory Committee, the Wootton Committee on the penal system that had been commissioned to sugge: non-custodial sentencing measures. In Quebec this idea was tested in six regions in 1977-78. The results having been encouraging in 1978,the programme was extended throughout Quebec in 1980. In an assessment conducted after the first year of operation, Simon, Vallières et al (1982) described the objectives of the adult programme at che time of its introduction as follows:

1. to provide the judicial system with a non-custodial alternative while safeguarding the public interest
2. to repair the criminal damage done by means of a socially productive sentence.
3. to encourage the participation of the community in the administration of justice.
4. to rehabilitate (p.103)

This programme then was entrenched in the framework of diversion It was the Probation Service which in a pre-sentence report could recommend such an alternative measure. One may wonder with the author whether the "community scheme" is an alternative in terms of sentencing or a specific alternative to custodial penalties. This controversy, incidentally, is still topical and remains a moot and appropriate question.

COMMUNITY WORK AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This measure, first tried in the United States and in Canada for the youth sector became more prevalent in the late seventies.

A number of documents in fact report on some experiments in various provinces. It should be recalled here that there had already been a movement towards some form of diversion before current youth legislation was passed by the federal and provincial governments which will be discussed further on. Frequent screening was taking place at different levels of the judicial process. Moreover, pilot projects in terms of diversion were tried. There was a clear intent to discover and experiment with new alternatives to court appearances and institutionalization. Thus in 1975 in Quebec the Batshaw Report recommended that the number of places in correctional institutions should be reduced in favor of the creation of a number of alternative resources.

Community work schemes were one of these. It was considered to be a new measure close to the adolescent's own milieu, more appropriate to meet his needs and to make him assume more responsibility for his actions.

This scheme was a part of the increasingly formal development of a new philosophy of dealing with young offenders. The idea of making adolescents and the community assume responsibilities, a respect of their needs and the development of their potential, all became guiding principles and gradually found expression in legislation.

LEGISLATIVE CROSSROADS

January 15, 1979 was a crucial date in Quebec, it was the day when a new law on Youth Protection (Bill 24) adopted on December 19, 1977, came into force. This act inspired by the philosophy of diversion. Redefined the protection of young people. It covered all adolescents with delinquency problems (Section 40) or in need of protection (Section 38). It embodied the idea of the respect of adolescent rights and advocated personalized handling and maintenance of their life setting. Bill 24 introduced an important new concept: voluntary schemes and community work was one of 10 possible alternatives.

In daily practice some problems arose in the implementation of this law, particularly in the case of delinquency. A judicial imbroglio led to amendments in 1981 (Bill 10) and the setting up of a special Parliamentary Commission on Youth Protection, chaired by a member of the National Assembly, Jean-Pierre Charbonneau. It tabled its report in 1982 and its recommendations led to legislative amendments in matters of delinquency in 1984. These changes (Bill 60) are also consistent with the new federal Young Offenders Act. The Young Offenders Act came into force on April 2, 1984. A recognition of the need for change and the need to adapt to the realities of today's society, this Act replaces the Juvenile Delinquents Act of 1908. It covers young people between the ages of 12 to 17 inclusive who are guilty of an offence under the Criminal Code or other federal legislation.

Striving for a balance between rights and needs, rights and responsibilities, this Act is also based on the philosophy of diversion:

> "One of the innovative provisions of the new Act is the recognition that, for less serious offences, alternative measures to the formal court process might be used".
> (Solicitor General of Canada, 1982, p 8).

These alternative measures, one of which is community work, are additional ways of dealing with young offenders and may be invoked with or without a court order.

In his press release of April 2, 1984, the Solicitor General of Canada emphasized that the act encouraged the courts to pass non-custodial sentences and underlined the important role of community groups, parents and other people concerned with the treatment of youth.

> New approach to juvenile delinquents! New terminology! A wider and more appropriate range of interventions.

The juvenile delinquent is now called the young offender and Quebec's voluntary measures are termed alternative measures, one of which is community work. Community work can also be ordered by the court.

> "Reparation of the damage inflicted on society or one of its members by means of a certain number of hours of non-remunerated work with an organization or a member of the community and performed by the young offender".
> P. 36 - Reference Manual

TO SUM UP

As shown in diagram 1, an active search for alternatives began within the framework of a new approach based on the principle of diversion. This research gave rise to the development of alternative solutions and led to major legislative changes both, in Quebec (Bill 24) and in Canada as a whole (Young Offenders Act). At the same time specific pilot projects were started. The Community Work Programme represents an excellent example of the application and implementation of such an option. It served as a pilot project for the planning, drafting and implementation of the new federal law. This Quebec experiment tested one of the voluntary measures provided for in Bill 24, namely community work, described as an alternative measure since April 1984 by the Young Offenders Act. In this experiment community work was ordered by the Youth Court.

The Young Offenders Act also provides for both ways of applying this measure.

DIAGRAM 1

FORMULATION OF NEW MEASURES

Active and appli ed
research of alternatives
specific experiment

New approach of
intervention within
the framework of
diversion
principles

Options such as
community work

Major legislative
changes

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMME (CWP)

The Community Work Programme was one of the first, if not the first, of any experimental programmes to test the concept of community work for young people in Quebec.

This experiment was conducted in the Montreal metropolitan region from June 1982 to June 1983. It was intended to try out innovative measures in this area of which the Charbonneau Report had said in 1982:

> "that it would more adequately meet the needs of some adolescents due to the very nature of their delinquency which - it should be recalled - is often only transitory or accidental." (p.179).

THE FIRST STEPS

The first steps in the CWP were performed by two students of the School of Criminology of the University of Montreal in the summer of 1979. They conducted a survey which enabled them to determine that the various parties involved with youth were interested in developing an experimental community work project in the carea.

The Bureau de Consultation-Jeunesse Inc., a non-profit organization, already very much involved in work with young people became the sponsor of the project.

The Consultation Centre of the Solicitor General of Canada, Quebec region, welcomed it since it covered three of the priorities of the Centre at the time, i.e. juvenile delinquents, diversion and alternative measures as well as increased sensitization of the community to criminal justice problems. The Consultation Centre thus agreed to fund the major part of the project (69%), Other financial backers were: the Youth Protection Directors of the three Social Service Centre (CSS) of the metropolitan region, i.e. the Centre des Services sociaux du Montréal-Métropolitain (CSSMM), the Centre des Services sociaux Ville-Marie (CSSVM), and the Centre des Services sociaux Juifs à la famille (CSSJF). [Metropolitan Montreal Social Services Centre, Ville Marie Social Services Centre, Jewish Family Social Services Centre].

The fifth funding agency was the Comité de la Protection de la Jeunesse (CPJ-Montréal) [Youth Protection Committee]. Some contributions were also received from private sector coporations.

In June 1980 the CWP began its experiment and in September it admitted the first young participants.

Its territory consisted of the Island of Montréal (excluding the West Island) and the Island of Laval. The team consisted of a coordinator, Danielle Paquet (criminologist) and three members with multi-disciplinary qualifications Carole Choronzey (psycho-sociologist), Michel Lafortune (psychologist) and Michèle Marsolais (technical assistant). Installed in a centrally located office, on St. Denis Street close to a subway station, the team began to organize its activities in the large, densely populated urban area.

Its mandate called for both action and research. Action with young people and the community and a scientific evaluation of the practical application and scope of the project. For the members of the team it was a research-activity, as they preferred to consider it.

OBJECTIVES

At the start of the experiment a reformulation of the objective as originally defined clearly circumscribed the CWP activities.

The final report (1983) which to a large extent served as inspiration for the present document points this out very clearly.

The general objective addressed youth and the community; it consisted of two aspects:

A. to permit an adolescent who has committed one or several offences to make restitution by becoming aware of the harm caused to the community or to one of its members. (p.16)

B. to make it possible for community agencies to become involved in the process of rehabilitation of the adolescent who has committed one or several offences. (p.17)

Specific objectives were then grafted on to the general objective for each of the aspects. With regard to young people (part A) here is the text contained in the final report (1983):

> "In terms of his involvement in the programme activities the adolescent should:
>
> 1. participa_e in deciding on modalities and adjustment regarding the project.
> 2. perform the activities outlined in the agreement between him and the CWP officer
> 3. assess the impact of the community work on himself
> 4. assess the impact of his delinquent act on the victim (p.16-17).
>
> Regarding the community (part B)
>
> 1. comply with the programme according to the operating procedures established
> 2. actualize their commitment to the programme (p.17-18).

It was further established that some other objectives involving teenagers, the community and the network, i.e. the various participants in the justice system, could be identified and achieved by the CWP.

In a nutshell, the intent of the project was to make adolescents and the community assume responsibility and to sensitize them by "emphasizing the project's educational aspect over the punitive one for the young person." (p.23). The basic tenet of the Community Work Programme was to

> "teach the young person to assume responsibility". (p.79)

THE PARTNERS INVOLVED

We have already identified the sponsor of the pilot project, the Bureau de Consultation Jeunesse Inc. (BCJ) and the five funding agencies.
We shall now briefly describe the various other partners involved in the Community Works Programme (CWP)

- the placement agencies
- the community organizations
- the adolescents

Let us repeat:
First, the referring agencies, i.e. the placement officers responsible for teenagers who have committed an offence who refer them to the CWP. Who are they? They are the Youth Protection Directors or their deputees, the latter being workers at one of the Social Service Centres. Following an evaluation, the case worker considers voluntary measures such as reconciliation, restitution to the victim, community work, etc. He could also decide to take the case to court, the judge having the authority to issue an order for community work.
Hence there are two sources of referrals. The partners mentioned, the placements officers, either social or court workers who, incidentally, remain responsible for the adolescent while he is in the CWP.

We shall now turn to the community agencies.
They are non-profit organizations that agree to admit teenagers ordered to do community work. The CWP recruited them and listed them in a data bank. During the experiment the latter contained 135 agencies, 100 of which actually admitted adolescents.

This is how the CWP classified the major partners:

- Community centres (50)
  (recreational - cultural - sports)
- recuperation and material assistance (21)
- day care(13)
- mental deficiency (4)
- physical handicaps (11)
- senior citizens (18)
- miscellaneous (16)

Located throughout the area served (Montreal and Laval) each of these agencies had to offer a specific task to the teenager and ensure adequate supervision as well as follow-up with the CWP. For this purpose each agency had a case worker, called supervisor.

Some organizations (35) were not used. Why? A number a reasons could be given such as no available opening at the time of placement, incompatibility of supply and demand in terms of tasks, time place...., changes in the orientation of the agency, disbanding of organization, lack of young participants living in the area at the time of its association with the CWP.

Finally, it should be mentioned that 99 agencies were French-speaking and 36 either English (16) or bilingual (20), i.e. 27% of the community partners. A language breakdown of the young participants indicated that 25% were anglophones. It could therefore be concluded that the organizations in a position to admit teenagers were certainly able to fill the bill in terms of language. Last but not least, the third partner, the adolescent himself.

TARGET CLIENTELE

Who were the teenagers covered by this measure? To understand how the CWP handled its clients, we shall look at the first year of the project separately from the other two.

In the first year the team members defined their target clientele as follows:

> Young people of both sexes aged from 14 to 17 inclusive, first-time offenders whose offence was of a non-serious nature and not directed against people.

It should be noted that the Programme then only accepted juveniles involved in a voluntary measure. The first year was a trial run and all partners had a say in the selection of candidates. Starting in the second year, the criteria became more flexible and the target clientele was defined as follows:

> Juveniles of both sexes aged 14 to 18 (the latter provided the offence was committed before they turned 18) young people responsible for one or several offences. Excluded were those who had resorted to violence or had serious behavioral disorders and major drinking or drug problems. Beginning with the third year some exceptions were made for teenagers involved in violent offences against people given the particular circumstances of the offence and their personalities.

It should be added that for the first trial year as well as for the next two, community work had to be the only project for the young CWP referral; he could not be involved in any other programme at the same time.

ITINERARY OF THE JUVENILE

The progress of the teenagers through the programme could be briefly described as follows: it should be borne in mind that the course described here was subject to the provisions of Bill 24. Any juvenile having committed one or several offences and who was arrested by a law enforcement agency was referred to the Youth Protection Director. Diagram 2 shows the itinerary of the teenager who agrees to do community work or who is ordered to do so by the Youth Tribunal.

DIAGRAM 2

ITINERARY OF THE ADOLESCENT

JUVENILE - OFFENCE(S)

ARREST

REFERRAL TO YPD

EVALUATION

DECISION

Closing of file

Voluntary measure

Choice of Community Work Measure

Diversion

The court can - among other options- order a sentence of community work

CWP

(receives a call with basic information on juvenile, his offence, his environment)

YPD

Interview - negotiation
Agreement (on agency, task, timetable)

Presentation and implementation of the measure in the agency selected with PTC follow-up

A look back on the experience with the juvenile, the agency supervisor and the C W P

Final report to referring agency (Y P D)

In case of non-compliance return to referring agency (Y P D)

How long should community work last?

During the first year the minimum time at the CWP was six (6) hours and the maximum forty (40) hours. In view of some problems because of periods being too short and their impact on the juvenile slight, the minimum duration was boosted to twelve (12) hours. The original minimum of six hours did not actually allow the teenager to become involved. Moreover, the CWP placement officer spent an average of 12 hours organizing the project and this did not allow enough time for the agency supervisor to interact with the teenager. The decision appeared to satisfy all partners involved, the maximum remained 40 hours. The number of hours of voluntary work to be performed was determined during negotiations with the teenager. The criteria prevailing at these interviews included the seriousness and circumstances of the offence, the interests and availability of the young participant and of the community agency selected. In some court referrals the number of hours was already established prior to arrival at the CWP.

The task to be performed and the time of performance were also subject to discussion with the adolescent. The interview with the supervisor was conducted without the CWP worker being present unless requested otherwise by the teenager or the supervisor (about 1 case in 10). It should be noted that an important criterion in the selection of an organization was its closeness to the teenager's home environment.

During the performance of the service, the CWP placement officer remained in touch with the supervisor and the juvenile by phone or in person and mtaintained contact with the YPD case officer. At the conclusion of the programme, a three-party interview (teenager-supervisor-CWP) provided an opportunity to take stock based on an exchange of views on the course of the programme. A descriptive report was then sent to the case worker or the court, respectively.

INDISPENSABLE TOOLS

During the first year, the CWP team in addition to fomulating criteria and agreements with the placement agencies, community organizations and funding agencies developed the tools necessary to steer the adolescent along the itinerary just described.

With regard to the teenager, these tools included:

- A data sheet (basic data on the juvenile)
- A technical record (parameters of the programme)
- An attendance report (to be completed by teenager)
- an assessment questionnaire (for the final interview)

Regarding the community organizations, each supervisor received an information kit consisting of

- A data collection grid on the organization
- Procedure to be followed
- Attendance report
- Assessment questionnaire to be completed by supervisor

Interviews with the various partners a lowed for adjustments; flexibility, communications and mutual understanding were paramount in these discussions.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

Below we shall briefly present the main results achieved during the 3-year CWP experiment.

Where are they from?

Most of the juveniles came from the CSSMM (73%). All told four hundred seventy seven (477) candidates were referred to the CWP by sixty eight (68) placement officers. Thirty three (33) teenagers were rejected (6.9%) mainly because they failed to meet the criteria. Thirty three (33) did not participate although they had been admitted because the case orientation had changed in the meantime.

A total of 411 teenagers participated in the CWP

Amongst the latter, 299 did so within the framework of voluntary service (72.7%), while 112 were under a court order (27.3%). A breakdown by sex revealed 16 girls among the 411 participants; 96.12% were males with an average age of 16 years and 10 months.

Two-thirds of the adolescents were students, most of them high school pupils. They came in equal parts from the CSSMM area or downtown Montreal (95) and Montreal East (89) with 85 from Laval; 54 lived in the northern downtown area and 32 in south-western Montreal. Regarding the other two social service centres, the Ville Marie CSS had 38 teenagers enrolled and the Jewish Family Social Services Centre had 18. More than half or 57.7%, lived with their parents.

What did they do?

What offences did these young people commit? And how many? Close to two-thirds (51.3%) participated in the work programme after being referred for a single offence. About one third (29.7%) had committed two or three and one tenth (9%) had committed four or more offences. Together the 411 participants had been referred for 777 offences for a global average of 1.89 offences per person.

The mean figure for offences for teenagers on a voluntary programme was 1.59 and 2.68 for those on court ordered service. As the authors of the Final Report pointed out "the adolescents under court order had a more significant record in terms of number of offences committed." (p.44). Their official records in terms of delinquency were also longer.

It was interestng to note that for all offences reported (777) most were committed with accomplices: one or two for 71.7% of the cases with 3, 4, or 5 and more for 17.1%. Only 11.2% of the offences were carried out by a single offender.

What about the nature of the offence?

By and large the most frequent offences were thefts and burglaries. Next came thefts of under $200, thefts from automobiles and thefts of over $200. "These 5 types of offences represented more than half of all offences (66.3%) and this regardless of source of referral." (p.49) Taking into account the referral source, it was noted that the teenagers under Court orders appeared to have a more serious delinquency record both in terms of crimes against property (burglaries outranked the other groups, for example) as well as in offences against people which were more frequent in this group. In short, the participant in the Community Work Programme was

> a young male referred by the CSSMM aged 16 years and 10 months, a high school student living with his parents. He has committed 1.89 property offences and did so with the help of an accomplice.

How much have they worked ?

The juveniles did 7,413.25 hours of voluntary work, the average per adolescent being 18.03 hours.

The members of the team noted that half of the teenagers (49.9%) performed services ranging from 13 to 24 hours, 28.5% between 0 and 12 hours and 21.6% worked more than 25 hours." (Final Report (1983), p. 51). Depending on referral base, the average ranged from 16.01 hours for those on a voluntary scheme to 23.39 hours for the group under court order. The higher the number of offences committed, the longer the length of service.

> 92% of participants in the Community Work Programme finished their scheme.

In fact 378 of the 411 participants successfully completed their agreement with the CWP. It should be noted incidentally that in this regard the source of referral was irrelevant.

Global attendance figures in the community organization was 4.37 hours on the average to complete the programme. This figure does not include the two or three trips necessary to meet with the CWP officer to be introduced to the supervisor of the community agency if the teenager so wishes and for the final interview.

What tasks did the juveniles perform in these organizations?

The task of assistant monitor ranked first. It applied to several sectors

sports activities

day care

work with the physically or mentally handicapped

in design, woodworking or craft workshops

and was chosen by 40.5% of the participants.

In second place came activities related to recovery (15.3%) followed by:

maintenance work (7.3%)

carpentry and painting (6.6%)

home maintenance work (6.1%)

tasks related to the organization and course of a particular activity (4.6%)

meal preparation (4.6%)

waiting on tables (4.6%)

It should be noted that here again the referral source was irrelevant.

A last point: the length of the interval between the offence itself and performance of the work scheme, was on average 5 ½ months. Several partners including the adolescent himself considered the interval too long and thought it might jeopardize the effectivenesss of the programme. These delays were mostly due to the law enforcement authorities, the YPD office, the court, etc.

In a nutshell, the young CWP participant

> performs an average of 1803 hours of voluntary work in a community organization; he performs mostly as assistant monitor in a framework of 4.37 hours of attendance in the organization; he completes the programme successfully.

An what now?

What becomes of the teenagers? Do they recidivate? What do their parents think?

The members of the Programme attempted a statistical follow-up survey. This may have been a rash move but provided some valid observations. Five months after graduating from the programme, 48 of 295 participants contacted (71.8% of total) had recidivated (16.3%). Of this number 14 had done so while they participated in the scheme. It should be noted that recidivism was slightly higher for teenagers under court order (18.5% versus 15.6%). Most of those who recidivated where tried.

Lacking any comparative measure regarding other groups of adolescents on different schemes, it would be rash to draw any further conclusions. It should just be added that during a review of the pilot project, Claire Sylvestre (1983) contacted the juveniles and their parents. When the parents were asked whether they were satisfied with the scheme and its effects, the majority (30 of 54) mentioned "the decisive incidence on non-recidivism". Some added

> "That this experience had made their sons more responsible and more aware of a new reality, they had matured." (p.38)

The teenagers interviewed by Claire Sylvestre concurred on the point of non-recidivism and they also appeared satisfied.

Another way of assessing the effect of the scheme was to look into subsequent involvement of the teenagers in the organization concerned; 90% actually became so involved or 23.8% of those who graduated from the programme.

According to Sylvestre (1983) about 35% of those she contacted were still active.

In short, the adolescent on a Community Work Programme

> does not recidivate and is happy with the performance of the scheme; his parents shared the view, some juveniles even continued to be active in the organization.

IMPACT

From the juvenile point of view

By and large the impact of the community work programme was very positive for the teenager himself. The success rate or graduation from the scheme confirmed this. Personal satisfaction and awareness of reality and of his own potential and reactions - these were important achievements. For the young person it was "an occasion to experience a new social role in a non-threatening environment". (Final Report 1983, p. 88). And thus " to experience himself in a new social role" strengthening" his feeling of belonging and his integration into the community." (p.91). The subsequent involvement of a few and the recidivism rate tend to confirm this positive impact. The experience opened their eyes to the world and to hitherto unsuspected community resources. The members of the team, incidentally, noted that it was difficult for the teenagers to see the "relationship between their delinquent acts and any symbols of reparation." (p.93). T he team considered this too abstract a concept. It would be interesting to examine this statement further.

From the point of view of the community

Through the community organizations, the community also appeared to have benefitted. It was certainly better to recognize that young people have problems but that they also have potential and some motivation for change rather than to write them off as hopeless. To become involved with them and thus to become sensitized to their situation - these are some of the benefits highlighted by the members of the participating community organizations.

Gradually during the experiment the role of the supervisors became better defined. Interest and involvement increased; the team also noted that tolerance towards juvenile delinquents grew apace.

It is important to stress that flexibility, clear rules and the confidence that developed between supervisonrs and team members made for interesting communications and fruitful cooperation. Meetings between supervisors were organized on three occasions and training sessions (2) on topics related to adolescent problems were well attended.

The authors of the Final Report (1983) noted:

> "The main motive of the participant organizations was to help juveniles rather than to receive help. Their participation offered them a new experience and made it possible to acquire know-how in a sector until then little known by their organization." (p.118)

It also taught them to realize that the legal system cannot settle everything. The community can and should become involved, it can cope and has a tremendous capacity to do so. Finally, young people had a positive impact on the community through the real efforts they deployed in the participant organizations.

From the point of view of the placement agencies

This experiment made it possible for the placement agencies to better define what they meant by and expected from alternative schemes. They were able to use a resource in the context of the implementation of a new law and in anticipation of another. They could reflect on the pros

and cons of the scheme - was it an educational measure or merely a different form of punishment. These two concepts were discussed by the team members and the social and judicial placement agencies. It appeared quite clear that the pilot project represented tangible help to them but it was also an opportunity to consider the possibilities which the programme offered to young people , to the community and to their practice.

COSTS

Now a word about costs. The members of the CWP established a per capita cost by dividing the total expenditures over three years or $279,000.00 by the number of adolescents admitted to the CWP, or 444. This mathematical operation gave a cost of $628.38 per participants. This gross cost did not take into account the various benefits that would have to be analysed to arrive at an accurate weighted figure. This cost should "not be considered in isolation from the benefits which the scheme offers to young people and to community organizations." (Final Report (1983)p.13

EPILOGUE FOR THE EXPERIMENT

For three years (June 1980 to June 1983) the pilot project allowed the communities of Montreal and Laval to become involved with young people and their specific needs. Over three years a handful of people with limited resources attempted to demonstrate the viability and worth of a community work programme. For 3 years, as they themselves expressed it:

> "the CWP workers have constantly emphasized the need to make the juvenile assume responsibility by providing him with the means to repair in a positive manner the wrong he had done and by offering him specific opportunities to assume responsibilities within this reparation." Final Report (1983), p.88.

During 3 years they attempted together with their partners to establish communications and mutual understanding based on a search for the best support for both the adolescent and for the community in a spirit of

complementarity. For 3 years they experimented and were able to prove that community service has its place in a range of resources for the young and that a community group like theirs was a very valuable link in the network interacting with all the other parties involved.

AND NOW

What has been happening to the CWP since June 1983?

It still exists, its status has changed, however. The Community Work Programme has become a non profit corporation, called Travaux Communautaires Jeunesse Montréal Inc. (T.C.J.M.). It was formally incorporated on March 30,1983 but started its activities with this new setup on November 17, 1983. It had to give up its St. Denis Street premises but currently occupies a smaller office at Villeray Street, still in Montreal.

It also had to cut back on staff. Between June and November 1983 it was unable to admit participants due to lack of funds and because of its uncertain future. Thus there was a complete lack of resource people during those months.

After it received its first subsidy from the Ministry of Social Affairs (MAS), from the Metropolitan Montréal Social Service Centre and the Ville Marie Social Service Centre for the November 1983 - June 1984 period, the team was able to start up operations again. Between November 21, 1983 and June 30, 1984 it admitted 194 young people. Since June 1984 the Ministry of Social Affairs alone finances the T.C.J.M. which had admitted another 139 juveniles by October 19, 1984. Admission criteria had to be adjusted to the requirements of the funding agencies or the one hand and to the Young Offenders Act and the amended Quebec Bill 24, on the other.

The ages of the adolescents are still between 14 and 18 years, they are not necessarily referred for their first offence and delinquency is more serious than during the time of the pilot project. The community

work programme is no longer the only scheme, it can be combined with one or two others. One can therefore no longer speak of an alternative measure. The cases still come from two sources: The DP* and their deputies and the Youth Tribunal. The cases referred by the latter must be admitted by Travaux Communautaires Jeunesse Montréal Inc. T.C.J.M.). The experiment being concluded, the T.C.J.M. must now accommodate all teenagers referred by the placement agencies to perform community service.

Diagram 3 shows the current itinerary of the adolescent.

Some statistical data on the T.C.J.M. and its clientele are given for the period November 1983 - October 19, 1984. During that year, 333 teenagers were referred while it should be recalled that 477 had been admitted during the three years of the experiment. Sixten (16) juveniles underwent a change in orientation, 27 dropped out and 66 have been in the programme since October 19, 1984. Two hundred twenty four (224) have graduated from the scheme and the data below refer to them.

Where do they come from?

Most of them (94.7%) come from the Metropolitan Montreal Social Service Centre and were referred by 70 different workers and 17 judges. Sixty-six percent (66%) are under court order and 34% are on an alternative option. These figures are the inverse of the pilot project situation. Most of the teenagers are males, actually only 5.4% are girls. Their average age is 17 years and most of them are high school students. Thirty-six per cent (36%) are unemployed and 12% are working. A number live with their parents (46%), others with the mother alone (38.8%) or with the father (7.6%). A comment: 5.4% had been on the CWP before. A number of juveniles are also in another scheme in addition to the Community Work

* stands for Provincial Director, in accordance with the new legislation, formerly YPD - for Youth Protection Director

DIAGRAM 3

CURRENT ITINERARY OF JUVENILE

JUVENILE + OFFENCE(S)

ARREST

DEPUTY CROWN ATTORNEY
(examination of evidence)

Closing of file | Minor cases | Serious cases (violent personal injury offences)

Referral to DP

Evaluation

Decision

closing of file | alternative scheme | diversion system | Court

Community Work | may - among other decisio order community work

T.C.J.M. | DP
(receives call with basic information on juvenile, the offence, his background

interview - negotiation

agreement (on organization, task, timetable)

attendance and performance of scheme in organization selected with follow-up by TCJM

review of experience with juvenile, organization supervisor and TCJM

final report to placement officer(DP)
in case of non-compliance return to placement officer (DP)

Programme.(48%), some in two other schemes (7%) and 1% in three others. Probation is the most widely used additional scheme. The teenagers under court orders become increasingly involved in more than one scheme (56%) as compared to 13% of those on alternative options.

What did they do?

Most of the participants were referred for a single offence (53%). This figure is lower than during the experiment, although as a general average they have committed 2.5 offences compared to 1.89. There is still a difference between alternative schemes (1.75) and court orders (2.9%). The latter figure is not very different from the pilot project (2.68) but the large number under court orders account for the increase in the general average. Most have committed their offences with one or two accomplices (74.9%). Burglaries, simple theft and thefts involving automobiles make up most of the offences. Those on court orders usually have longer records.

How much work have they performed?

In one year the teenagers (224) performed 5,802 hours of voluntary work. The average is higher than during the pilot project, 25.9 hours compared to 18.03 per person. Their overall attendance in community organizations: 4.76. They preferred community centres (42.3%), recovery and material assistance organizations came next (25.6%). In terms of tasks, general maintenance dominated with 30%, chores involved in recovery (18.3%) and carpentry, painting, stripping (10.4%) were of interest for 85% of the participants. The position of assistant monitor which ranked first during the experiment attracted only 15.7% of adolescents.

The organizations taking part in the programme were for the most part the same ones as those involved in the pilot project. Another fifteen (15) or so are new.

HIGHLIGHTS

"What the scheme should aim at is an

> equivalence between the harm to the victim
> or to society and the youth's ability to make
> restitution given his needs." (Tremblay and Bréniel (1984) p.26

The major objective of the Young Offenders Act and the recently amended Bill 24 is the search for this equilibrium. It emphasizes alternative schemes in order to make all parties involved assume responsibility. The idea of equilibrium and responsibilization was and still continues to be the focal point. It is significant and clearly defined by the philosophy according to which the CWP lived during the three-year pilot project and which still prevails at Travaux Communautaires Jeunesse. The experimental programme launched a concept and actualized the notion of community work which led to a positive development of this idea. T he experiment described in these pages gives rise to reflection and questions. Some questions are being asked concerning the very concept of the programme: punishment or education? Alternative to sentencing or alternative to custodial penalty? There is some controversy regarding the scheme itself: should it be a single one as stipulated under the pilot project or can it be combined with some other measure? Might this not impose too heavy a burden on the juvenile? Can a fair balance be achieved? On which delinquents should our action be focused? At the beginning of the experiment young people who have committed offences against personshad been excluded. Subsequently this criterion was broadened and juveniles who had committed offences against persons but who had not actually resorted to violence were and still are being admitted. This is an important question and is part of the context of the young offenders legislation.

The pilot project showed how important it was to pinpoint objectives and to have some form of ongoing evaluation. The CWP had an advisory committee consisting of representatives of the Consultation Centre, of the Youth Protection Committee, the director general of the BCJ (the sponsoring agency)

and three Youth Protection Directors, the CWP coordinator and some case workers from the Social Service Centres and the CWP. This committee held close to a dozen meetings and encountered a number of difficulties: unstable membership, unclear terms of reference, lack of effectiveness. However, the idea of an advisory committee is a good one, its membership should be more restricted and it should have clear terms of reference. For example, one of its roles could be to establish a mechanism for ongoing evaluation which is essential to ensure the future of the programme.

Now a brief word on a problem facing Programme members: financing. A review of the experiment in the various reports reveals how crucial this question is. It is important to keep that in mind and plan accordingly. How? That is the question.

In conclusion there are a few points that come to mind: how can the interval between the time the offence is committed, the decision and the performance of the scheme be reduced? This question involves the entire system and it should be addressed.

Finally, the lack of female participants in the Programme; the nature of their delinquency appears to make girls suitable candidates for the programme. Should this aspect not be further examined?

IN CONCLUSION

Ir should be borne in mind that the experiment we described is part of major legislative changes in matters of juvenile delinquency. The Community Work Programme is part of this backdrop of attempts to find new solutions better suited to adolescent problems and focused on the idea of diversion. The Young Offenders Act has highlighted the importance of alternative measures both in terms of diversion and of the judicial process. Community work is now recognized as an alternative scheme. Moreover, the

Ministry of Social Affairs which certified outside agencies clearly acknowledged the relevance of the T.C.J.M. Seven Community Work Programmes are now officially recognized. The T.C.J.M., a pioneer in the field, has been entrusted with a broader and more official role.

In conclusion, the names and addresses of the T.C.J.M. team are given below:

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